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ABSTRACT

This factsheet provides information about young people from ethnic minorities in Britain. In spring 1997, 48% of the ethnic minority population of Britain was under 24 years of age, in comparison with 31% of the White population. Twenty-two percent of the ethnic minority population was of compulsory school age, compared with 14% of the White population, and the proportion of students from ethnic minorities who complete basic levels of education has grown. In spring 1997, 81% of 16-to-19-year-olds from ethnic minority groups were receiving education and training (71% of them full-time), compared with 67% of White young people. At the ages of 20 to 24, minority members were even more likely to be receiving training and education. Black students were more likely to be in vocational education, and Asian students were more likely to be pursuing academic qualifications. About 13% of the students entering higher education in 1996-97 were from ethnic minorities, and 9% of the U.K. domiciled graduates in 1995-96 were from ethnic minority groups. However, 35% of the economically active (paid for work or looking for paid work) 16- to 24-year-old Blacks were unemployed in spring 1997 compared with 13% of young White people. Additional information is provided about employment patterns, language and religion, relationships and family structure, leisure activities, homelessness, young offenders, racial violence and harassment, and involvement with the justice system. (Contains 19 references, 12 figures, and 1 table.) (SLD)

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ED 429 138

Young People in Britain

Commission For Racial Equality

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YOUNG PEOPLE IN BRITAIN

POPULATION

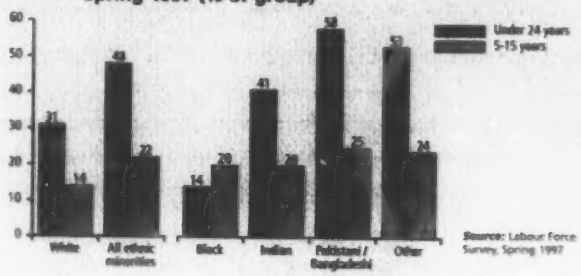
In Spring 1997, 48% of the ethnic minority population of Britain were under 24 years of age compared with 31% of the white population (see Figure 1).

In 1994, the Labour Force Survey estimated that 86% of people from ethnic minority groups under 16 years of age were born in the UK. Among 16-24 year-olds, 76% of Black people, 72% of Indians and 48% of Bangladeshis and Pakistanis were born here.

COMPULSORY SCHOOLING

In Spring 1997, 22% of the ethnic minority population of Britain were of compulsory school age (5-15 years), compared with 14% of the White population (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Young people in Britain, by age and ethnic group, Spring 1997 (% of group)



The proportion of young people achieving five or more GCSE higher (A-C) grades has increased across all ethnic groups since 1994. However, inequalities between some groups still remain. In 1996, 38% of Asians (including Chinese and Other Asian) and 23% of young black people achieved five or more GCSE higher grades, compared with 45% of White pupils.

FURTHER EDUCATION

In Spring 1997, 81% of 16-19 year-olds from ethnic minority groups were receiving education and training (71% of them full-time), compared with 67% of White young people (58% of whom were studying full-time). In the 20-24 year age group, the figures were 42% and 27% respectively (and 29% and 17% for full-time study). Black

Table 1. Qualifications among 16-24 year olds, by highest qualification held, ethnic group and sex, Spring 1997

	White %	All ethnic minorities %	Black %	Indian %	Pakistani & Bangladeshi %	Other %
Men						
Degrees	7	5	*	*	*	*
Higher below degree	4	*	*	*	*	*
A-level	29	27	31	32	22	24
GCSE grades A-C or equivalent	34	32	30	34	30	33
Other qualifications	11	15	15	*	19	21
No qualifications	15	17	17	*	22	*
Women						
Degrees	6	7	*	*	*	*
Higher below degree	4	*	*	*	*	*
A-level	26	21	*	25	15	28
GCSE grades A-C or equivalent	40	36	44	43	31	27
Other qualifications	10	14	*	*	15	18
No qualifications	14	18	19	*	26	*

** Numbers less than 10,000; estimates not included*
***Source**: Labour Force Survey, Spring 1997*

NOTES

1. *This factsheet follows the ethnic categories used in the 1991 census. The term 'ethnic minorities' is used to refer to people who did not tick the 'White' box when identifying their ethnic group. 'Non-white' ethnic minorities make up 5.6% of Britain's population.*
2. *All percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.*

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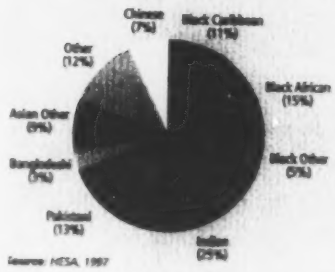
Figure 2. Ethnic minority UK home students entering universities and colleges in 1996/7



women between 16 and 24 years of age were most likely to be studying further (72%), and women from the Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups combined least likely (40%).

- Nearly a quarter of 16-24 year-olds from ethnic minority groups had at least one A-level in Spring 1997. Indian men were most likely (32%) to be qualified to this standard and Pakistani/Bangladeshi women least likely (15%); they were also most likely (26%) to have no formal qualifications at all (see Table 1). White 16-24 year-olds were more likely to have GCSE A–C grades and A-level qualifications than their ethnic minority counterparts. 16-24 year-old White men and ethnic minority women were equally likely (7%) to hold degrees.

- Black 16 year-olds in England and Wales were more likely to be studying for vocational rather than academic qualifications in 1996 (40% compared with 30%). Asian (including Chinese and 'Other' Asians) and White 16 year-olds, on the other hand, were more likely to be pursuing academic (41% and 38% respectively) rather than vocational qualifications (27% and 30% respectively). Students from all ethnic groups were more likely to be studying at Further Education (FE) colleges than at state schools. However, nearly two-thirds of Black 16 year-olds (62%) and almost half the Asian (48%) students of that age were at FE colleges, compared with 36% of White 16 year-olds.

- At the 1991 census, 32% of Irish-born men and 34% of Irish-born women aged 15-29 years had higher qualifications – mainly first and higher degrees, compared with 20% of all men and 18% of all women.

HIGHER EDUCATION

- 13% of the 516,700 UK students entering higher education in 1996/7, up from 10% in 1992, were from ethnic minority groups (see Figure 2 for a breakdown of the total).

Black Caribbean women were much more likely to enter higher education (63%) than Black Caribbean men (37%), while the reverse was true for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women taken together – 35% compared with 62% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi men.

- Black students are much more likely to go into higher education as mature students. In 1994/5, only 14% of Black first-year home students were under 19 years of age compared with 49% of Indian and 39% of White students – conversely, 56% of Black students were 26 years and over compared with only 15% of Indian and 36% of White home students.

- 18% of young people following HE courses at FE colleges at the end of 1996 were from ethnic minority groups compared with 5% at HE colleges.

- In 1996, the UCAS annual report showed that 18% of all acceptances to degree courses and 27% of acceptances to HND courses were from ethnic minority groups.

- At first degree level, the largest proportions of ethnic minority home students, predominantly Asian groups, were to be found in subjects such as pharmacy (37%), accountancy (30%), law (23%) and computing (22%). The largest numbers of ethnic minority students, however, were doing business and management, electronic engineering and computing.

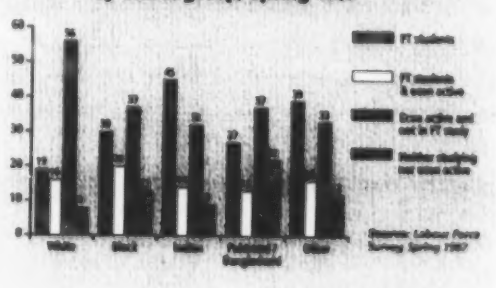
- In Spring 1997, 44% of all 16-24 year-old full-time students in Britain were also in paid work or looking for it. White students were most likely (45%) to be in this situation, followed by Black students (40%), students from Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups combined (32%), Other students (30%) and Indian students (23%). Figure 3 shows that White 16-24 year-olds tend to enter the labour market earlier than any other group: 56% were economically active compared with 29% of young people from ethnic minority groups. Among 16-19 year-olds, the figures were 36% and 19% respectively.

GRADUATES

- 9% of the 417,300 UK domiciled graduates in 1995/6 were from ethnic minority groups; 39% of them achieved first and upper second class degrees compared with 65% of White graduates.

In Spring 1997, 71% of 16-19 year-olds from ethnic minority groups in Britain were in full-time education compared with 58% of White young people

Figure 3. 16-24 year-olds, by main activities and by ethnic group, Spring 1997



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A study by Connor et al tracking the progress made by 1993 graduates for two and a half years showed that ethnic minority graduates were less likely than White graduates to be in permanent employment (that is, full-time or part-time work for three months or more), and more likely to be unemployed at any stage during that period. They were also more likely to be in short-term employment, except six months after graduation, and more likely during the first year and a half after graduation to opt for further study. 35% of ethnic minority graduates and 44% of White graduates from the class of 1993 were still in their first job two and a half years after graduation.

TRAINING

At the end of 1996, around 7% of the 262,000 16-25 year-olds pursuing vocational qualifications through Youth Training (YT) programmes in England and Wales were from ethnic minority groups; but in London they made up nearly a third of all participants (see Figure 4). In 1995/6, only 43% of ethnic minority YT participants had found a job after training, compared with 64% of White participants, and 45% gained qualifications, compared with 51% of White participants. Young people from ethnic minority groups made up 3% of all Modern Apprenticeship starts at the end of 1996, compared to 7% of the population of 16-25 year-olds as a whole.

9% of all UK domiciled graduates in 1996 were from ethnic minority groups

In Spring 1997, White 16-19 year-olds were twice as likely (17%) as those from ethnic minority groups (8%) to say they had received job-related training in the previous four weeks.

EMPLOYMENT & UNEMPLOYMENT

As Figure 5 shows, White 16-24 year-olds were most likely to be economically active in Spring 1997: 63% were in paid work or training and 9% were unemployed or looking for work. They were followed by Black 16-24 year-olds, 57% of whom were economically active (with 37% in paid work or training and 20% unemployed or looking for work). The unemployment rate among young Black people was 35% compared with 13% among young White people. 16-24 year-olds from the South Asian groups were least likely to be economically active.

White 16-24 year-olds were more than twice as likely to be working full-time (68%) than part-time (32%) in Spring 1997. Among ethnic minorities, only young Black people were more likely to be working part-time (59%) – among Black women, 75% worked part-time.

In Spring 1997, 36% of all 16-24 year-old ethnic minority employees were employed in the wholesale, retail or motor trades compared with 27% of White people in that age group (see Figure 6). Among 16-24 year-old male employees, 48% of White men worked in these sectors compared with 30% of ethnic minority men. Among 16-24 year-old female employees, 42% of ethnic minority women worked in wholesale and retail jobs compared with 27% of White women. 17% of all 16-24 year-olds from ethnic minority groups had jobs in hotels and restaurants, compared with 11% of Whites.

Figure 5. 16-24 year-olds and the labour market, by ethnic group, Spring 1997

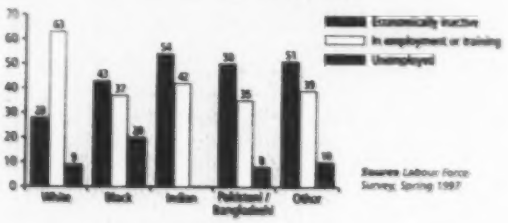

Figure 4. Young people on Youth Training and Modern Apprenticeships in England and Wales, by ethnic group, 1996

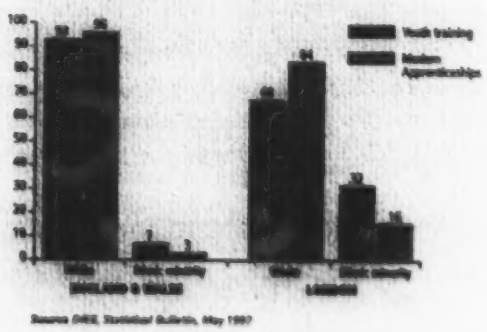

Figure 6. Main sectors of employment among 16-24 year-olds, by ethnic group, Spring 1997

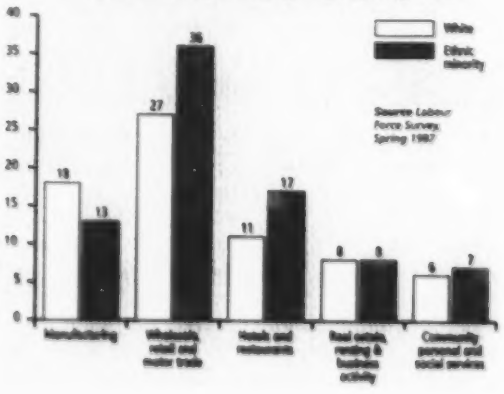

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Figure 7. Proportion of single and married people aged 30 and without children who live with their parents, by ethnic group (%)

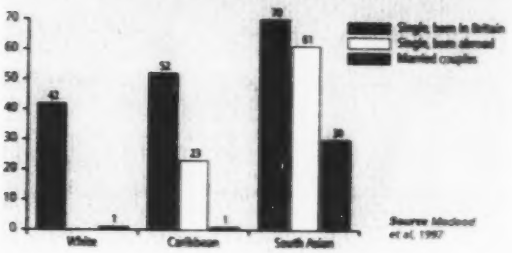
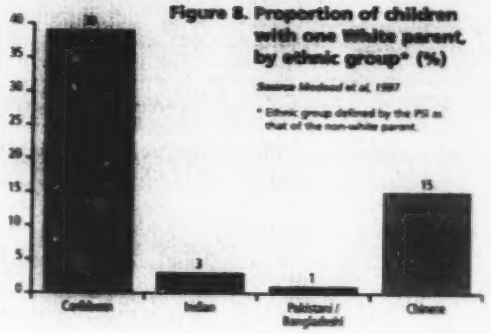


Figure 8. Proportion of children with one White parent, by ethnic group* (%)


Source Modood et al, 1997
* Ethnic group defined by the PSI as that of the non-white parent.
Caribbean
Indian
Pakistani / Bangladeshi
Chinese

- Around a third of all employees in distribution, hotels and restaurants earn less than £3.50 per hour, and close to half earn less than £4.00 per hour. A report for the TUC showed that, in hotels and restaurants, average hourly minimum pay after 1995 was £3.17, with 84% of all workers paid below £3.50.

- Union membership levels are lowest in the two industries where 16-24 year-olds from ethnic minorities are most likely to work: 8% of all employees in hotels and restaurants, and 11% of all employees in wholesale and retail, were union members in 1995. Union membership is also low among employees under 20 years of age, who comprised 68% of all full-time students in work in Spring 1997. Only 6% of all employees were under 20 years of age, and 23% were in the 20 – 29 year range.

LANGUAGE & RELIGION

- The 1994 PSI survey found that almost all 16-24 year olds from ethnic minorities speak English fluently or fairly well. The lowest proficiency rates in this age group were among Pakistani (84%) and Bangladeshi (80%) women.

- More than half of all 16-29 year-old Indians and African Asians and nearly half the Pakistanis in this age group now have English as their main spoken language, compared with only a fifth of their Bangladeshi peers.

- A survey of school pupils in Greater London shows that at least a quarter of them speak a language other than English at home. Bengali, spoken by 5% of pupils, is the most common first language, other than English, followed by Punjabi (3%) and Turkish and Urdu (at 2% each). Altogether, 275 languages are spoken by pupils in London's schools.

- 16-34 year olds from all ethnic groups were less likely to feel that religion was very important to the way they lived their life than people aged 35 and over. Pakistani and Bangladeshi young people were most likely (67%) to think so, compared with 5% of White, 7% of Chinese, 18% of Black Caribbean and 35% of Indian 16-34 year-olds.

35% of economically active 16-24 year-old Black people were unemployed in spring 1997 compared with 13% of young White people

RELATIONSHIPS

- By the age of 24, people from White and South Asian groups were more than twice as likely (35%) as those of Black Caribbean origin (16%) to be married or living with a partner, or to have been married in the past; young Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were seven times as likely to be married as young Black Caribbeans. By 29 years of age, this was true of 68% of White people and 77% of South Asians, but only 38% of Black Caribbeans.

- White and Black Caribbean people were much more likely to be cohabiting than South Asians. Only a small fraction of South Asians were cohabiting by the time they were 24 years old (7% of all with partners), compared with 55% of Black Caribbeans and 48% of White people. At 29 years, the cohabiting proportion among Black Caribbeans was only slightly lower (49%), but had fallen to 27% among White people and 3% among South Asians.

- Black Caribbean women were most likely (20%) to have children when they were teenagers (16-19 years), but by 24 years of age, 37% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women were likely to be mothers, compared with 32% of Black Caribbeans, and 18% each of Indian and White women.

- The PSI survey found that single people born in Britain, aged 30, and without children were most likely to live with their parents if they were South Asian: 70% did so compared with 52% for Black Caribbeans and 42% for White people (see Figure 7). Once married, however, the majority of couples in all ethnic groups stopped living with their parents: only 1% each of White and Black Caribbean couples, and 30% of South Asian couples stayed with their parents.

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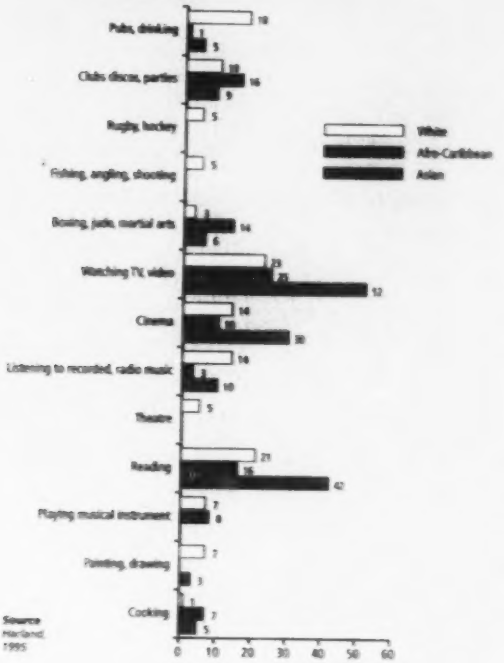
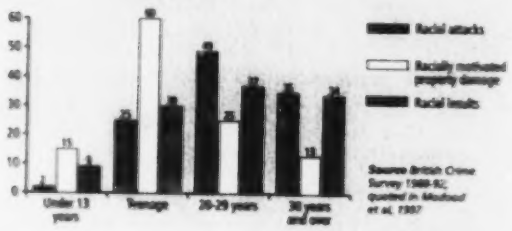
Figure 9. Selected leisure interests, by ethnic group, 1993



Source: Harland 1995

Figure 11. The most serious incidents of racial harassment, by age of perpetrator, 1988 – 1992



Source: British Crime Survey 1988-92, quoted in Maitland et al, 1997

(18%) than either Black Caribbeans or Asians (both 5% or less), and twice the proportion of Asians as Black and White respondents mentioned watching TV and videos. Asians were most likely to say they spent time reading (42%), but this was due to the significant number who mentioned reading the Koran or other religious books in their leisure time. Hockey and rugby were the only sports not mentioned by young people from ethnic minority groups. Black Caribbeans were most likely (14%) to be involved in boxing and the martial arts.

HOMELESSNESS

A 1993 study of 2,000 homeless people in England found that one-third of all homeless people under 25 years of age were from ethnic minority groups.

YOUNG OFFENDERS

Data from the British Crime Survey 1988-92 suggest that nearly half (45%) of all violent crimes are committed by 16-25 year-old men. A 1992 Home Office study of young people found that Black and White 14-25 year-olds were equally likely to have committed an offence (43% and 44% respectively). South Asian young people had significantly lower rates, with 30% of Indians, 28% of Pakistanis and only 13% of Bangladeshis likely to have offended. Property offences were the most common type of offence across all ethnic groups (see Figure 10). Black Caribbean women were more likely to have committed an offence than women from other groups.

RACIAL VIOLENCE & HARASSMENT

In more than a third of all cases of racially moti-

Parentally arranged marriages are now a minority practice among younger African Asians (15%) and Indians (27%). However, half of all Bangladeshi 16-34 year-olds and 65% of Pakistanis in this age group said that their parents chose their marriage partner.

86% of White 16-34 year-olds and 84% each of Black Caribbeans and Chinese in this age group said that they would not mind if a close relative were to marry someone from another ethnic group. Pakistani (41%) and Bangladeshi (52%) 16-34 year-olds were least likely not to mind.

The PSI study found that, for 39% of children under 16 years of age with a Black Caribbean mother or father, and for 15% with a Chinese mother or father, their other parent was White (see Figure 8).

LEISURE

A survey published in 1995 by the National Foundation for Educational Research asked 14-24 year olds about their leisure activities. The numbers from ethnic minority groups were small, and these findings should only be taken as broad indicators. As Figure 9 shows, White young people were much more likely to go to pubs

By the age of 29, 68% of White people and 77% of Asians are married or living with a partner, compared with 38% of Black Caribbeans

Figure 10. Levels of offending among 14-25 year-olds, by ethnic group, 1992

Source: Home Office Research Study 145

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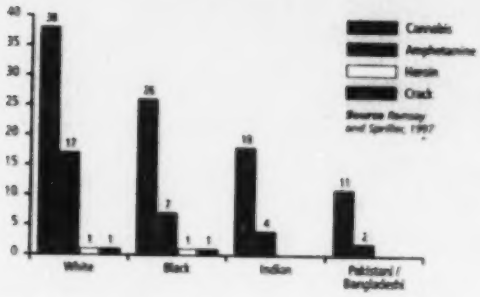
had ever taken certain drugs, by ethnic group, 1996



vated violence against Black Caribbeans, and in over half of the cases against South Asians, the perpetrator was described by the victim as being between 16 and 25 years of age (see Figure 11). In nine out of ten incidents of racially motivated violence and harassment, the perpetrators responsible were White; however the offenders in a small proportion of racial attacks (5%) and racial abuse (3%) were described as Black.

POLICING

- Young people from ethnic minority groups are more likely to be stopped and questioned by the police than White young people. In a written parliamentary answer on 29 March 1996, David Maclean MP said that in the Metropolitan area, 112,763 (59%) of the 189,928 people stopped and questioned by police were from ethnic minorities.

- 85% of Black Caribbean 16-34 year-olds thought that neither they nor Asians could rely on the police to protect them from racial harassment.

PRISONS

- Young male offenders (aged under 21 years when sentenced) made up 18% of the prison population of British nationals in England and Wales in June 1996, and young females 13% of the female prison population of British nationals. Black Caribbean young male offenders accounted for 9% of young British male offenders and women from the Black Other group made up 5% of all young British female prisoners.

- Young offenders from all ethnic minority groups tend to serve longer sentences than young White offenders. In the prison population as a whole, the proportion of White young offenders serving sentences of over 18 months on 30 June 1996 was 71% compared with 87% of Blacks, 79% of South Asians and 75% of Chinese and Other groups.

DRUG USE

- The 1996 British Crime Survey showed that 16-29-year-olds from ethnic minority groups were much less likely to have used drugs than their White counterparts: 46% of White young people said they had taken drugs compared with 31% of Black Caribbeans, 22% of Indians and 16% of Pakistanis/Bangladeshis.

- Cannabis was the most widely used drug in 1996 (see Figure 12), followed by amphetamines. Analysis of earlier British Crime Surveys shows that women are less likely to take drugs than men, but White and Black Caribbean young women are significantly more likely (26%) to do so than Asian women (8%).

Over half the racial attacks against South Asians, and more than one in three against Black Caribbeans, are committed by 16–25 year olds. In nine out of ten cases, the perpetrators are White

SOURCES

COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

The Commission for Racial Equality is working for a just society which gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live free from discrimination and prejudice and from the fear of racial harassment and violence.

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